

MAY
2008



CITY OF WICHITA

Neighborhood Services

What is Neighborhood Services?

Neighborhood Services fosters a sense of community, evaluates neighborhood strengths and needs, and helps to stimulate a vibrant and growing economy by coordinating city services and engaging citizens in a dialogue with the City of Wichita. We offer services and programs that provide a range of problem solving tools, resources, and technical assistance to achieve a positive impact on livability and nuisance issues in the community. We encourage citizen input and participation in all aspects of government through District Advisory Board meetings, District breakfasts, neighborhood meetings and electronic and paper newsletters and mailings. Neighborhood Assistants and Community Educators facilitate daily communication between citizens and city staff to assist with homeowner issues, property concerns, city services and community resources.

There is no typical day to be had in Neighborhood Services. Responsibilities include managing a Neighborhood City Hall, coordinating a class or meeting, facilitating a work group to implement a neighborhood project, communicating with city departments to resolve citizen questions and concerns, planning a special event or public meeting for an upcoming project, and so on.

Neighborhood Assistants support the City Managers Office as well as their District Councilperson. From both offices come many requests to initiate projects, assist with city issues, meet with citizens or neighborhood groups, or attend a discussion/ forum related to their district. NA's partner with many local and state agencies to provide the best outcomes to citizen issues.

Community Educators support the City Manager's Office as well play a key role in the responsibility to serve their community with non-traditional educational and lifelong learning resources. CE's partner with many local, state and national organizations to bring the best to their communities.

We are fortunate to work with so many diverse groups and be involved in so many city and community projects. It is imperative to involve a Neighborhood Services representative in your project or event in order to help facilitate the engagement of citizens and resources that you will need.

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The following pages list the Neighborhood Services staff and their district/location. Please feel free to contact us for help with neighborhood issues. Remember we are out in our neighborhoods and communities every day. We hear from citizens and see the reality of our city everyday. We are an excellent resource, with the experience and resources to better our city together.

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"Neighborhood Services is committed to providing your group/ department with important information. Please distribute this information to your co-workers and peers."

Have you seen our updated webpage? www.wichita.gov/CityOffices/neighborhoodservices/

District I/Atwater Neighborhood City Hall News

LaShonda Porter, Neighborhood Assistant-lporter@wichita.gov



During the 1st Quarter of 2008, Atwater served 13,435 residents. Our facility hosted meetings that ranged from staff meetings, community meetings, workshops, computer lab usage, and city staff meetings.

District 1 Recurring Meetings: District 1 Advisory Board meeting – 1st Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at Atwater. District Breakfast – 1st Saturday of every month, 8 a.m., at Ryan's 3323 N Rock Road. Both of these meetings provide an opportunity to ask questions of Council Member Lavonta Williams as well as, network with other community groups and residents. *Please join us, we would love to see you there...*

Stop Blight Action Response Team (START): This initiative is a partnership between city staff and the community. The purpose of the program is to identify creative ways to revitalize a blighted community. This program works in partnership with the neighborhood, empowering them to do more and take ownership of their community. This was a pilot project that began in 2006 and has now successfully moved into its second area between 15th and 17th and Poplar to Grove.

The Garden of Economic Recovery: The Garden of Economic Recovery is an initiative sponsored by Power CDC in partnership with Neighborhood and Homeowner Associations in District 1, the City of Wichita, and Interfaith Ministries-Americorps Go-Zones. The garden land was dedicated by a pioneer of the community who is known as the first African American photographer in Wichita as well as, for her role in the Dockum sit-in. The garden is approximately 150 square feet and will be stocked with produce such as green peppers, corn, onions, tomatoes, and collard greens. The garden was created to help assist with the economic struggles that citizens face in District 1. The garden will be open to the public and donations are welcomed.

21st Street Business Meeting: The businesses along 21st Street from I-135 to Woodlawn were brought together to discuss the economic needs and development of the 21st Street corridor. Council Member Lavonta Williams heard from the businesses, and city staff provided an update on the streetscape that is in the budget for 2009-2010. This was an exciting meeting with ideas ranging from a hotel at 21st and the interstate, to face lifts on the commercial businesses along the route. More discussions to follow with continued planning.

District II News

Antoine Sherfield, District 2 Neighborhood Assistant– asherfield@wichita.gov

Adopt-A-School Program- District II adopted Clark Elementary on Feb. 29, 2008 as a pilot project. The **Adopt-A-School** program is an effective partnership between education and the business and private sectors of Wichita. The purpose of the program is to utilize the vast amount of human resources and talents of the community to strengthen, enhance and enrich the quality of education for our communities.

Fire Station #20 Ground Breaking- Vice-Mayor Sue Schlapp, Chief Ron D. Blackwell and the City Council broke ground at the location for Fire Station #20 on April 18, 2008. Fire Station #20 will provide East Wichita with greater safety through better response times, state-of-the-art equipment and a highly trained staff. Fire Station #20 compliments residential and commercial development that is making far-east Wichita a desirable destination. Fire Station #20 includes a meeting room as part of its design. This facility will serve as a location for District II Advisory Board Meetings.

District II/Patrol East Sports Extravaganza- The Sports Extravaganza will provide youth in District II with a week of sporting activities in the month of June. The object is to provide youth, grades 2nd thru 5th, the opportunity to explore and learn a variety of different sports.

District III/ Colvin Neighborhood City Hall News

Janet Johnson, Neighborhood Assistant-jcjohnson@wichita.gov

Several park projects are underway in District 3: Council Member Skelton and the Park Department are partnering with Key Construction and Cornejo to put a new basketball court in Stearman Park in Planeview. The Park Department is currently in the process of designing the layout for some new amenities at the pocket park located at Mt. Vernon and Bluff. The new amenities will include a bar-b-cue and picnic tables. Earth Alliance is partnering with the city and the Grandview and Meadowlark Neighborhood Associations to plant trees in the area. Design continues on the dog park for Chapin Park at Hydraulic and MAcArthur.

Business Associations: The South Central Business Alliance is working on a membership campaign focused on businesses located on Broadway between Kellogg and Pawnee, and businesses located just off that main arterial. The former South Wichita Business Association is regrouping to "promote economic viability" in South Wichita. This includes addressing infrastructure needs and quality of life issues.

Revitalization: The Hilltop Revitalization Steering Committee continues to meet monthly and address revitalization efforts in that neighborhood. City staff will be initiating a START (Stop Blight Action Response Team) in Hilltop within the next month. Council Member Skelton and County Commissioner Gwen Welshimer are exploring possibilities for improving services in Planeview.

Appreciation: The free tax preparation service wound down at Colvin NCH with a party for staff and volunteers on April 10. Volunteers were at the facility from the first of February through April 15. The South City Neighborhood Association held an appreciation dinner on April 10 for their members who deliver the newsletter, and for city staff from OCI, WPD, Neighborhood Services and Council Member Skelton.

District IV/Stanley Neighborhood City Hall News

Kelli Glassman, Neighborhood Assistant- kglassman@wichita.gov

Recent Events-Stanley just finished another successful year partnering with AARP to do taxes at Stanley Neighborhood City Hall. Things went very smoothly, but were very busy. Stanley even had to add many additional appointments and refer people to other sites when they reached capacity. A big thanks to all the volunteers who helped!

Upcoming News- The Principal of Stanley Elementary, Julie Bettis, will be leaving at the end of the year. Stanley has enjoyed working with her, but look forward also to continued partnership with her predecessor. Stanley is beginning to plan a health fair focused on nutrition and childhood obesity which will take place at the end of September. McCormick Neighborhood Association will be having a neighborhood picnic in June and a clean-up in July. District IV is no longer going to be having monthly district breakfasts. Thanks and appreciation to Dianne's Breakfast, Brunch and Lunch's for their support and the citizens who have attended. Over the next few of months District IV will be having the District Advisory Board meetings in a couple of different locations, the South Branch YMCA and the Wichita Ice Sports, so please stay tuned for those announcements.

District V News

Megan Buckmaster, District 5 Neighborhood Assistant- mbuckmaster@wichita.gov

Improvement projects: District 5 broke some exciting ground this past quarter with the Cowskin Creek Flood Protection project in February and Fire Station #21 in April. Both projects will provide increased safety to the homes of District 5. During the Halloween flood of 1988, hundreds of thousands of dollars of damage was done to residents along Cowskin Creek due to flooding. Ground was broken on February 4th to commence the Flood Protection project which is a partnership between the City, Sedgwick County and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The \$4.7 million project will be completed in February 2009. Construction at I-235 and Central is underway to help relieve traffic congestion in West Wichita and improvements are being made to the Central and Tyler intersection.

Fire Station Groundbreaking: On April 11th a long awaited Groundbreaking ceremony took place to kick off the construction for Fire station #21 at 135th St. and 21st St. West. This new station will provide better services to the growing community out in that area and provide meeting space for the community. Completion of the station should be sometime in 2009.

District VI/Evergreen Neighborhood City Hall News

Terri Dozal, Neighborhood Assistant- tdozal@wichita.gov

Council Honored: Vice Mayor Sharon Fearey was honored to receive the Kansas Park and Recreation's 2008 Distinguished Elected Official award. The award is given to an elected official who has demonstrated outstanding support for quality of life improvements.

District Activity: 18 informational programs which were recorded on the Hispanic radio station KYQQ106.5 to assist the non-English speaking residents on topics from the City's police, fire, library and OCI departments, USD 259 information and the Wichita Area Sexual Assault center. This service has been offered to the community weekly for the past six years.

District Fun: "Coffee with Sharon" had an extra treat in March during the monthly breakfast held at the Broadview Hotel. The Hotel offered one of their "Historic Flapper Tours" that included learning that the Restaurant located in the basement of the Broadview (which had seating capacity of over 600) served as Wichita's only 'speak easy'. The basement was also equipped as a fall-out shelter during the intense "Bomb Scare" years of the late '40s and throughout the 1950s. In 1929 a north wing was completed and in 1948 the large ground floor Crystal Ballroom was added to the west side of the hotel. It is here that you will find the original handcrafted mosaic mural created in the late '40s by the great Native American painter, Blackbear Bosin. Also joining the tour was the hotel's ghost Clarence.

District concerns: Horses have been a recent problem in the 6th District. It seems residents want to keep more horses than allowed on their property. This has become a big problem due to odor and maintenance of the animals. A request was presented at the District Advisory Board meeting to have a moratorium on selling animal permits if the request is for horses. At present this request is being reviewed by the Law and Environmental Services departments. Dillon's at 13th and Waco, referred to the United Nations Dillon's of Wichita, leaves the neighborhood. It leaves a large part of the older, inner-city neighborhoods without access to a grocery store. You could see people on a daily basis walk to and from Dillon's in all sorts of weather. Where will they go? The loss of a grocery store is an amenity that has no easy replacement. These neighborhoods are often filled with elderly people who are slowly seeing the areas that they have spent their lives in changing too much for them to stay there. Where will they go? It was a sad day when this Dillon's closed.

NORTHEAST: Community Princess Tea: The Community Princess Tea for girls ages 2 to 12 was a huge success at the Atwater Neighborhood City Hall! Volunteers put on an afternoon of fun Sunday, April 27th, etiquette tips and lady-like instruction for 80 little ladies in training. The multipurpose room was all aglow in bright pink, purple, orange and green. While 25 parents looked on, participants enjoyed the pink chocolate fountain, tea cakes, pink tea, prizes, and their tiaras. The event was free and coordinated by Patricia Houston, Community Education Northeast Coordinator, and LaShonda Porter, Neighborhood Assistant for District 1.



SOUTH: Colvin hosted its annual Parent University Tuesday, April 22nd. We had a modest number of attendees who came for the wonderful health fair. Over 20 agencies from around the city answered questions and provided guidance to those in needs. Door prizes included books, Walgreen gift cards, and a youth bike.

Grant awarded: Maureen Connolly Brinker Tennis Foundation of Kansas Inc. awarded PACK (Planeview Activity Camp for Kids) awarded us \$2,000 for this summer's program. "We are so thrilled with your work in the Planeview area and wish to continue our support." adds Jan Geringer, Chair for 2008. They are also working on hiring a tennis pro, signing up volunteers, and collecting racquets and summer clothing.

Upcoming Classes: Adult Education Class (ESOL-English as a Second Language). Learn English language/civic & computer skills. Offered Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday nights from 6:00-9:00 pm. Walking Club-Join our walking club and get valuable exercise along the scenic tour of Planeview Park. Pedometers will be provided. Offered 8 weeks on Tuesday night from 6:00 – 7:00 pm. Cooking w/Youth- Boys & girls will learn to prepare yummy foods. The class includes instructions on kitchen safety, table settings, and how to use kitchen utensils. For ages 6 – 10, offered 5 weeks session on Tuesdays: June 10th – July 8th from 6:30 – 7:30 pm. Lawn Mower Clinic- Date to be announced. This 3 hour class is taught by Sedgwick County Extension Master Gardeners is designed to assist youth in earning summer income by mowing lawns. Information will acquaint youth w/lawn grasses and their proper care, lawn mower safety, lawn mower maintenance, and lawn mowing jobs. This clinic is for boys and girls in the 5th – 9th grades who want to earn extra money at a summer job.

NORTHWEST: Meetings/ Classes at Evergreen NCH: Sewing Classes offered through Sedgwick County Extension will continue through the month of May. There is a weekly average of 12-15 people who attend. English as a Second Language Classes also continue to meet until the end of May. There are 14 people enrolled. Habitat for Humanity meets once a month, with an average of 32 people attending and CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) meets monthly with an average of 15 people. We are now divided into two committees (structure/curriculum) but will continue to meet at Evergreen on a monthly basis.

Summer programming: Evergreen is currently interviewing applicants for Evergreen Summer Activity Camp. Decisions will be made on 4 staff people by the early part of May. Work continues on ESACK curriculum, in house speakers and great field trips for the kids.

Annual Health Fair: On April 12th, the 4th Annual Health Fair was held at Evergreen Park and Recreation with more than 400 people in attendance.

Frequently asked questions about Neighborhood Services :

Q: What City departments does Neighborhood Services work with?

A: We work with every department in the city, but some more than others including Planning, Public Works, Park and Recreation, Housing, Police, Office of Central Inspection and Environmental Services.

Q: What City projects has Neighborhood services been involved with?

A: Too many to list. It is important to involve Neighborhood Services in most citywide projects that affect neighborhoods. Some examples of projects are: revitalization projects, improvement projects, clean-up efforts, City ordinance issues, inspections, neighborhood and project meetings, citywide and district specific special events and Council initiatives.

Q: Have there been any new initiatives for the City that have come out of Neighborhood Services?

A: The START projects in District 1 and 3, Citizens Academy, Neighbor to Neighbor, Connect with Community and Youth Day at City Hall.

Q: Where can I get more information on Neighborhood Services to give to citizens that I encounter?

A: You can visit our webpage address: www.wichita.gov/CityOffices/neighborhoodservices/ or each Council webpage for District Advisory Board information and we have a Neighborhood Services brochure we can provide your department/building with. Just call Megan Buckmaster @ 268-4351 or email her at mbuckmaster@wichita.gov.